



# City of Tucson Ward 5 Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 12

May 2011

## A LETTER FROM VICE MAYOR FIMBRES

Dear Friends:

On May 24, the Mayor and Council by a vote of 6 to 1, gave approval for the City of Tucson, Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget.

These past two years have been very difficult because of the economic downturn that has hit everyone across the country. Everyone has felt this impact.

The City of Tucson has reduced its work force by more than 1,000 positions through attrition and retirements. It is a smaller workforce, the same size it was back in 1995, trying to meet the needs of Tucson's 21st century community. In addition, more than 30 administrative and management positions were eliminated, saving more than \$3.0 million in salaries and benefits. Current employees have taken a 3.5% pay reduction by taking nine, unpaid furlough days.

This vote by the Mayor and Council for tentative approval of the proposed FY 2012 budget did not burden those who could least afford it, with a renter's tax. Small businesses who are trying to stay afloat during these tough economic times were not burdened either when the Mayor and Council rejected proposals for an advertising tax, increase in business license fees, as well as a land speculation tax.

The first action for the FY 2012 occurred during the study session of the Mayor and Council meeting of December 14, 2010.

This Mayor and Council, unanimously approved recommendations made to reduce the police and fire budgets (7.5% and 6.7%), so that no active police and firefighters were laid off and no stations were closed.

Both the police and firefighter union's, as well as the labor council, helped to draft and supported these budgetary proposals. The budget's for both public service departments make up close to 62%, of the FY 2012 general fund budget, totaling \$423 million.

Arizona's Legislature also had a hand in the budgetary process when they swept more than \$10 million in LTAF funding for roads, as well as \$69 million in state shared revenue for the past two fiscal years.

Contrary to what has been reported, the City of Tucson has a debt restructuring for \$9.5 million in the spring of 2012, if the land sales do not come through and presently, there

### FREQUENTLY USED PHONE NUMBERS

**Emergency Services**  
**TPD & TFD**  
**DIAL 911**

**Permits 791-5550**  
**Housing Assistance**  
**791-4739**

**TCC - 791-5522**

**Code Enforcement &**  
**Graffiti removal**  
**792-CITY (2489)**

**Trash Pick up &**  
**Environmental**  
**Services 791-3171**

**Transportation &**  
**Street Maintenance**  
**- 791-3154**

**Tucson Water**  
**Billing - 791-3242**  
**Public Info. - 791-4331**

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are a couple of parcels which have received interested and could bring in more than \$7 million.

This Mayor and Council approved increases to the rates for Sun Tran fares, effective July 1. The Transit Task Force was extended two additional years, providing additional time to continue examining the overall “health” of the system, exploring alternative funding options, and developing a five-year plan for transit services and fares.

These actions by this current Mayor and Council are nothing new. Just eight days into my term as your Councilmember on December 15, 2009, the City Manager announced the City was facing \$33.5 million budgetary short fall for the FY 2010 budget.

This Mayor and Council dealt with that situation and started work on the FY 2011 budget, which had a projected shortfall of \$44.0 million and approved a balanced budget.

On October 5, 2010, this Mayor and Council approved the City Manager’s recommendations for revenues and expenditures totaling \$8.3 million. In addition, the Mayor and Council the following week, October 13, approved a further half-million dollars, in budgetary reductions to outside agencies.

Despite these gathering “storm clouds,” this Mayor and Council took positive action to help encourage businesses and economic growth for Tucson. Thanks to your Councilmember and current Vice Mayor, Tucson’s Certificates of Occupancy requirements were simplified and streamlined.

Other changes made by the Mayor and Council include rewriting the Land Use Code, changing the rules for business signs and for parking space requirements. These changes resulted in more than \$200 million in commercial construction and development permits being taken out for projects in the City of Tucson since these new proposals went into effect in August 2010.

Construction on the Unisource building is going on downtown, and in record time, the Family Dollar Store on 22nd Street and the Bridges Project development in Ward 5, which got off to a great start with the opening of the new Costco Store. Further construction for the City of Tucson will be the Modern Streetcar Project, which benefits the entire city but not on the city’s “dime,” thanks to secured grants from the federal government.

In addition, this Mayor and Council made decisions, changing course from previous actions from previous Mayor and Council’s, so that city government can meet the needs during these current times.

My office brought forward a measure to allow Sun Tran to have more advertising on the inside and outside of their buses, as well as their fare guides, ticket passes and any other materials.

This measure will help in cost recovery for the fare box and to alleviate the general fund expenditure for the bus service.

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Sun Tran is also saving money through Mayor and Council directed utilization of the procurement card (P-Card), for their transactions and vendor payments – a potential savings of up to \$300,000.

In addition, with the lifting of the restrictions on advertising on Sun Tran buses, six buses will have the bus wraps, to the tune of more than \$100,000.

The City of Tucson's use of the procurement card (P-Card) process is being expanded by city departments for their purchases of materials or payments, potentially saving the taxpayers in the millions of dollars.

Parks and Recreation are now able to solicit advertising and sponsorships thanks to the Mayor and Council approving the proposal my office brought forward to repeal the restrictions that were in the City Code - another potential revenue stream to help preserve Parks and Recreation programs and services while alleviating the general fund expenditure.

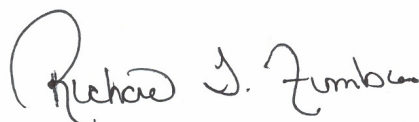
Many actions have been taken by this Mayor and Council to deal with the budgetary situation. In Ward 5, I have reduced the staff of the Council office from six people (when my predecessor was in office), to now three, reducing my office's expenditures by more than \$60,000.

To date, this Mayor and Council has cut a lot out of the budget, in expenditures as well as employment positions and continues to look for ways in cutting the budget.

However, cutting is only part of the picture of recovery. We must, in turn, stimulate the economic engine to make the City move again.

Your Mayor and Council have done a lot in this regard and hopefully, we are working towards the "light at the end of the tunnel."

Peace,



Richard G. Fimbres  
Your current Vice Mayor and Council member  
Ward 5

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